

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 /092 W

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FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1479

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 3778

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, US, CI, AS, RQ

SUBJ: PUERTO RICO IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24: REACTION TO
NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE

1. CHILEAN MISSION OFFICER HOLGER, WHO HAS RELIABLY
REPORTED TO US ON COMMITTEE OF 24 DEVELOPMENTS, CALLED
FROM THE COMMITTEE MEETING ON AUGUST 21 TO INFORM US
THAT THERE WAS "WIDE SPREAD INDIGNATION" IN THE COMMITTEE
OVER THE HOFMANN ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST 21 NEW YORK TIMES.
(TRANSMITTED BELOW).

2. HOLGER STATED THAT COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDING OUR
FRIENDS FELT THAT HOFMANN HAD DOCUMENTED THE CHARGES OF
COMMITTEE SUBSERVIENT TO THE U.S. WHICH CUBAN PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE ALARCON MADE IN THE AUGUST 20 MEETING.0

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THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION REJECTED THE CUBAN-SPONSORED TEXT BECAUSE IT WAS REGARDED AS MEDDLING WITH INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE UNITED STATES AND OFFERING UNITED NATIONS ENCOURAGEMENT AND LEGITIMACY TO A FORCE -- THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT--THAT IT REGARDS AS BENT ON VIOLENT SUBVERSION.

THE DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE AND OTHER UNITED NATIONS BODIES HAVE DISCUSSED PUERTO RICO'S STATUS OFF AND ON FOR SEVERAL YEARS. ON EACH OCCASION, COMMUNIST AND THIRD-WORLD DELEGATIONS HAVE ACCUSED THE UNITED STATES OF PRACTICING COLONIALISM IN THE ISLAND.

THIS YEAR, CUBA AND HER ALLIES HAD PREPARED A DRAFT RESOLUTION THAT WOULD HAVE GIVEN THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT THE STATUS OF PERMANENT OBSERVER AT THE UNITED NATIONS, A STATUS NOW HELD BY THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION AND VARIOUS AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

HOWEVER, SOME BLACK AFRICAN DELEGATES ON THE DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE PERSUADED THE SPONSORS TO REWORD THE TEXT IN LESS SPECIFIC TERMS, DROPPING THE DEMAND FOR OBSERVER STATUS.

THE UNITED STATES, WHICH IS NOT REPRESENTED ON THE COMMITTEE, MADE NO PUBLIC COMMENT DURING THE PROCEEDINGS AND DID NOT AVAIL ITSELF OF THE PROCEDURAL POSSIBILITY OF DEMANDING TO BE HEARD AS A PARTY INVOLVED IN AN ISSUE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

AMERICAN OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THAT THE UNITED STATES OSTENSIBLY WAS IGNORING THE DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE BECAUSE ANY STATEMENT MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONSTRUED AS AN IMPLICIT ADMISSION OF THAT BODY'S COMPETENCE TO EXAMINE PUERTO RICAN AFFAIRS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO POINTED OUT LAST WEEK THAT ONLY SIX OF THE 24 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN THE DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE HAD FREELY ELECTED GOVERNMENTS. THE STATEMENT NOTED THAT PUERTO RICO'S POLITICAL PARTIES MUST FACE FREE ELECTIONS EVERY FOUR YEARS, AND SAID THAT LESS THAN 5 PER CENT OF THE ISLAND'S ELECTORATE HAD SUPPORTED
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INDEPENDENCE IN ALL POLLS DURING THE LAST 20 YEARS.

COMMITTEE ACTION DELAYED

LAST FRIDAY, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE, SALIM A. SALIM OF TANZANIA, ANNOUNCED THAT A VOTE ON THE CUBAN-SPONSORED DRAFT RESOLUTION WOULD BE TAKEN ON MONDAY OR YESTERDAY. HOWEVER, BY LAST NIGHT THE COMMITTEE HAD NOT GOT AROUND TO CONSIDERING THE TEXT.

THIS MORNING'S MEETING STARTED AFTER A DELAY OF MORE THAN AN HOUR AND THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE DID NOT COME UP UNTIL ABOUT 1 P.M., A TIME WHEN MANY DIPLOMATS USUALLY HAVE LUNCHEON ENGAGEMENT.

THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATE, A. DUNCAN CAMPBELL, ASKED FOR ADJOURNMENT OF THE ITEM, REMARKING THAT THERE WAS GREAT UNEASINESS IN THE COMMITTEE. BUT RICARDO ALARCON QUESADA OF CUBA PRESSED FOR A VOTE, CONTENDING THAT THE COMMITTEE HAD AGREED ON SUCH A PROCEDURE.

A DISCUSSION ON PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS ENSUED, DURING WHICH THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATE SARCASTICALLY CONGRATULATED HIS CUBAN COLLEAGUE ON THE QUALITY OF HIS "ELABORATE CIGAR-SMOKE-SCREEN." MR. ALARCON HABITUALLY SMOKES LONG HAVANA CIGARS DURING UNITED NATIONS MEETINGS.

THE CUBAN DELEGATE REMARKED THAT "A GREAT IMPERIALIST POWER" WAS RESORTING TO EVERY WEAPON TO PREVENT THE COMMITTEE FROM TAKING A DECISION ON PUERTO RICO.

NO VOTE BY CHINA

THE COMMITTEE VOTE WAS 11 TO 9 WITH 2 ABSTENTIONS. THE CHINESE DELEGATE DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE VOTING, AND ETHIOPIA'S REPRESENTATIVE WAS ABSENT.

VOTING IN FAVOR OF ADJOURNMENT WERE AFGHANISTAN, AUSTRALIA, CHILE, DENMARK, FIJI, INDIA, INDONESIA, IRAN, THE IVORY COAST, SIERRA LEONE AND TUNISIA. AGAINST ADJOURNMENT WERE BULGARIA, THE CONGO REPUBLIC, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, CONFIDENTIAL
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IRAQ, MALI, SYRIA, THE SOVIET UNION AND TANZANIA. YUGOSLAVIA AND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ABSTAINED.

THE MOTION INTRODUCED BY AUSTRALIA THAT WAS EVENTUALLY APPROVED CALLED FOR POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PUERTO RICAN SITUATION UNTIL THE COMMITTEE'S 1976 SESSION. THIS MEANS, ACCORDING TO UNITED NATIONS EXPERTS, THAT CRITICS OF THE UNITED STATES WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BRING UP THE MATTER OF PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE DURING THE 30TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIS FALL.

THE CHIEF AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UNITED NATIONS, DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN, IN A STATEMENT THIS AFTERNOON, CITED THE "UNASSAILABLE FACT OF THE FREE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO," AND TERMED THE DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE'S DECISION "A RESPONSIBLE ACTION."
UNQUOTE

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Message Attributes

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